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OCA 86-3207  
18 September 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Briefing on Nicaraguan Contras for CRS Staffer  
James P. Wootten

1. On 17 September 1986, the Agency representatives listed below discussed the Nicaraguan contras with Congressional Research Service staffer James P. Wootten. The briefing was held in the DI/ALA offices in HQs from 1400-1515, and was conducted entirely on an UNCLASSIFIED basis, although Wootten was unaware that he was receiving no classified material. No transcript was kept.

2. The following Agency personnel were present:

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[redacted] DI/ALA

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[redacted] DI/ALA  
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3. Wootten began by explaining that he intended to use the information we gave him as background information for a CRS report on the capabilities and prospects of the Nicaraguan contras. He then proceeded to ask a number of generalized questions about the military capabilities of the contras: what can they do? what do they need? what do they have to do in order to become regime-threatening? He was also interested in CIA's projections about the military situation over the next several years.

4. During the course of the briefing, Wootten expressed surprise and some unhappiness at the treatment he had received during a recent trip to central America. Apparently he was not allowed to visit any of the contra camps, and he several times professed not to understand why he was so restricted. Other than this, he voiced no complaints and appeared appreciative of the briefing he was given. He made no effort to pry into operational matters, and his questions for the most part were broad and not particularly probing.

5. Following the briefing, he again repeated that he understood that he was not to attribute anything to CIA, and commented that the briefing had been useful primarily in terms of confirming information he had obtained elsewhere.

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